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The Board of Health meeting begins at 2 pm. This is what's on the agenda:



MEETING PREVIEW: Board of Health Meeting for May 3, 2023

This month's Board of Health meeting focuses on matters of everyday health. For instance, there was an incident in the Dufferin part of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health where people g...

<https://guelphpolitico.ca/2023/04/30/meeting-preview-board-of-health-meeting-for-may-...>

The meeting has been called to order.

No Disclosure(s) of Pecuniary Interest.

Agenda approved as presented.

First, MoH Update. Dr. Mercer notes that it's nurses week next week and praises the nurses who work for public health. It's also Anti-Vapping Awareness Day, and while there will be a report coming back later this year, Mercer has some info.

Mercer reports that vapping is a problem at 100% of area schools. It happens largely in the bathrooms, which is why some bathrooms are closed at schools. There also also new disposal methods of vapping, which makes it easy to hide.

Retail is also a big issue. There's supposed to be limits of 20mg of nicotine in products, but some products have as much as 50 mg. Also, outside of specialty smoke shops there's only supposed to be mint and regular options, but fruit flavours area available everywhere.

Canada has some of the most lax laws when it comes to ecigarettes. Mercer says that we shouldn't be fooled by the assertion that vapes are a way to help people to quit smoking. The number of people smoking is down, so along with vapes we have to be aware of new niccotine gums.

Also, there's no evidence that vapes are a gateway to cigarettes as opposed things going in the other direction. We do not know the long-term effects of these products, so there's no justification to say that vaping is safer.

Cllr Goller asks if youth are presenting any effects from increasing vaping. Mercer says they don't collect that info at public health, but she notes that it's just as hard to quit a vape as it is to quit cigarettes, and that's been presenting as an issue.

Goller asks about penalties if stores are providing products to youth. Mercer says it's a progressive process all the way up to losing the license to sell, which can be fatal to a store.

One item under the consent agenda: Health Protection 2023 First Quarter Performance Indicator Summary January – March 2023. Basically the results of the inspections from the first quarter. https://wdgpublichealth.ca/sites/default/files/bh.01.may0323.c10_-_health_protection_q1.pdf

Motion to receive the report approved.

Next: Food Safety Program Report: International Women's Day Luncheon Event Enteric Outbreak. This report deals with an incident where 88 people reported gastrointestinal illness after attending an event at the Best Western Plus Orangeville last month on International Women's Day.

The goal of the presentation is also to demonstrate how public health responds to an emergency situation like this.

This incident in Orangeville demonstrated the rapid and effective response that public health is capable of says Chris Beveridge the director of health protection. Nearly 1,700 active food premises in the area, 252 are high risk.

Last year, there were nearly 2,600 inspections, with 57 suspect illness investigations. Every year 1 in 8 people get sick from contaminated food.

Now, the event. There were 240 attendees, catered by an outside caterer (33 of those in the region). Illness happened quickly with symptoms incl. nausea, vomiting, diarrhea... all of which were short lived. 88 people in all felt the effects.

The event organiser called the Orangeville office directly and the response began. You identify the participants, secure food, collect samples, and form something called an outbreak team to start the investigation.

So the investigation. There on-site investigation begins, they collect details, analyse the samples from the food and even the water, and then they form a hypothesis. In this case, they sent out an outbreak questionnaire and they got 193 responses out of 264.

All this analysis led public health to the chicken bowl as the likely source of illness, but they still don't know what component of the bowl was the key. Testing indicated a pre-formed toxin, *Bacillus cereus*, which was in the quinoa and the sweet potato.

What's this *Bacillus cereus*? It's a spore-forming bacteria usually found in soil and attached to fruit, veggies, rice and other starchy food. They're also resistant to heat and dryness, and they can survive the cooking process.

On March 16, PH did a follow-up inspection. They worked with the caterer to go step by step through the food prep process. The sweet potato was not washed before it was sliced and cut.

About 240 hours of agency time was spent on this investigation, and they're still not done. They're looking at how to prevent such an outbreak from happening again by assessing caterer's food handling practices.

Member Cavell asks about steps to make sure this won't happen again (since he's hosting event at that same venue in October). Paul Medeiros, Manager of Enviro. Health, says again they are working with the cater. Also looking at education about best practices for all caterers.

Also, it seems like the caterer left the door to the van open while unloading and the food was uncovered. This is why having a proper food management system is so important.

Cllr Caton asks about home based kitchens, are there regular inspections for those? Medeiros says any food business is subject to regular inspection, but the concern is that there might be some that fall under the radar. A comms strategy is coming in the fall.

Member Manktelow asks about that comms strategy. Medeiros says it's in progress, but they are keeping in regular contact through email with food businesses, and inspectors are raising the lessons learned in-person during new inspections. Also looking to target large events.

Cllr Busuttill asks about "ghost kitchens" and cross-contamination risk. Medeiros says a complaint about a "ghost kitchen" gets investigated, but they're not seeing a lot of that in the region.

FYI: "ghost kitchens" are where multiple brands operate out of same kitchen. Medeiros also notes that they're seeing the rise in commercial kitchens which are being rented out for different groups to use. More risk of cross-contamination, which they look for.

Motion to receive the report approved unanimously.

Next, Corporate Communications Annual Report 2022. Mercer notes that in the last couple of years they have had very big engagement numbers and is please to announce that she was "not as popular" in 2022.

David Kingma, Director of Administrative Services & Chief Administrative Officer notes that there was a return to normal levels of messaging in 2022, but there is a larger audience for WGDPH engagement now vs pre-pandemic.

Focus now is on regular public health programming and safety messaging (like food safety, see above).

Motion to receive the report passes unanimously.

Next, Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph. What is an ACE? As defined in the report it's a "potentially traumatic or stressful events occurring in the first 18 years of life that can have negative effects on children's developing brains."

Jessica Tomasik, Health Promotion Specialist presents. She invites you to think about ACE as a tree...

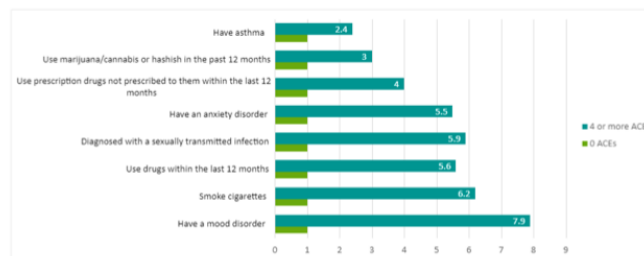
Figure 1. The Building Community Resilience Pair of ACEs tree³



Tomasik says that learning how to cope with stress is an important tool for childhood development, but unless the support there it's difficult to develop the tools.

ACEs is common in our community. Among the 990 participants in a survey in the region that 80 per cent reported at least one ACE in their lives, and 30 per cent had four or more.

Figure 2. Impact of ACEs on Health Behaviors, Physical and Mental Problems in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph



The Community Resilience Coalition of Guelph and Wellington (formerly the ACEs Coalition of Guelph and Wellington) has created training modules for educators, decision makers and people who work with at-risk children to help improve social and emotional brain development.

Tomasik is asked how the 990 people surveyed were chosen. Anna Vanderlaan, Health Promotion Manager, said they worked with some community partners to get a good sample size along age, sex, and background.

Busuttill asks if public health is the one to carry on this work. Mercer says that this isn't a specific standard, but there is a wide latitude for public health to take part in this work, because putting children on the path to good health starts early.

Manktelow asks about quantifying the impacts of the programs. Mercer says it's important to have strategies that are evidenced-based, but this is still a new area and public health is developing options for what that looks like.

Motion to receive information report approved.

Next, Finance + Audit committee business. Secretary-Treasurer Chris White praises the finance team for managing things well through trying times. That comes from the auditors too.

Motion:

1. That the Finance + Audit Committee makes recommendation to the Board of Health to receive and approve the 2022 Draft Audited Financial Statements, as presented in "Appendix 1" of the Finance + Audit Committee Report (BH.04.MAY0323.R04).

Next: Compliance Report: Stewardship of Management Operations. White says that PH is current after a lot of things fell to the side during COVID. Motion to receive the report approved unanimously.

The board now moves into closed session on these items:

CLOSED SESSION:

MOH Update(s): Labour relations or employee negotiations – Labour matters can be discussed in-camera due to Section 239(2) (b) of the Municipal Act relating to "personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees."

2023 Insurance Renewal: Liability and Cyber – Since this is a matter related to security, it can be discussed in-camera under Section 239(2) (a) of the Municipal Act, "the security of the property of the municipality or local board."

Chair Bridge says he doesn't believe that anything will come out of the closed meeting items. The feed has been cut so I guess...



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